

What is claimed is:

1. An image reading apparatus, comprising:

a reading transparent member;

a reading unit that reads through said reading transparent member an image on an original document that is being conveyed over an original document reading position of said reading transparent member; and

a spacer that is mounted on said reading transparent member on a surface thereof opposite the side thereof at which said reading unit is disposed and at a position upstream from the original document reading position relative to an original document conveyance direction,

wherein the spacer is configured such that height of a downstream end thereof relative to the original document conveyance direction decreases toward the downstream direction.

2. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said spacer is configured such that the downstream end thereof comprises a downward-sloping surface whereby the height thereof decreases toward the downstream direction.

3. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the downstream end of said spacer has a stair-step configuration, and that the height of the steps decrease toward the downstream direction.

4. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein said spacer comprises a lower surface member that comes into contact with said reading transparent member and an upper surface member that comes into contact with the original document during conveyance of the original document wherein such members are glued together to form a step configuration, and said upper surface member is made of a material having both a lower friction coefficient and superior wear-resistance than a material of said lower surface member.

5. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein thickness of said upper surface member is approximately 0.4 mm, while thickness of said lower surface member is approximately 0.25 mm.

6. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein a downstream end of said lower surface member relative to the original document conveyance direction protrudes from beyond that of said upper surface member by approximately 1 mm in the downstream direction.

7. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein said reading position is placed at a position approximately 3 mm from the downstream end of said lower surface member toward the downstream direction.

8. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the interval between said reading transparent member and an original document conveyance path is approximately 0.2 mm at said original document reading position.

9. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said upper surface member is formed by a film made of high-polymer polyethylene, while said lower surface member is formed by a film made of polyester.

10. The image reading apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said upper surface member is formed by a film made of fluorine resin, while said lower surface member is formed by a film made of polyester.

11. A spacer to be used for an image reading apparatus which has a reading transparent member and a reading unit that reads through said reading transparent member an image of an original document that is being conveyed over an original document reading position of said reading transparent member,

wherein said spacer is mounted on said reading transparent member on a surface thereof opposite the side thereof at which said reading unit is disposed and at a position upstream from the original document reading position relative to an original document conveyance direction,

wherein said spacer is configured such that height of a downstream end thereof relative to the original document conveyance direction decreases toward the downstream direction.